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FOR THE EVANGELIST.

IS IT RIGHT TO TAKE THE LIFE OF MAN IN ANY CASE?

ONE of the commands in the decalogue is, "Thou shalt not kill." This commandment is exceeding broad. Viewed in itself, it prohibits the killing or the taking of the life of any creature in any form, or under any circumstances. But to this law there are some exceptions. Animals may be *killed for food*. God said to Noah and his sons; "Every thing that moveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb, have I given you all things." Under the ancient dispensation beasts might be killed for *sacrifice*. Indeed, the Israelites were required to kill them for this purpose.

Under this dispensation too, the life of man as well as the life of the beast, was under many circumstances demanded. It was demanded not only in the case of the murderer, but also in case of the idolater, the adulterer, the blasphemer, the disobedient son, and many others.

Are the lives of men demanded under similar circumstances under the present dispensation? In other words, are the laws of the Jews binding on us? I shall venture to answer this question in the negative. Many laws of the above dispensation, are in the opinion of every body, I suppose applicable only to the Jewish nation. Such is the law, respecting idolaters. Deut. xvii. 2—5. "If there be found among you, within any of thy gates which the Lord thy God giveth, man or woman that hath wrought wickedness in the sight of the Lord thy God, in transgressing his covenant, and hath gone and served other gods and worshipped them, either the sun or the moon, or any of the host of heaven, which I have not commanded—then shalt thou bring forth that man or that woman unto thy gates, and shalt stone them with stones till they die." Are we under obligation to inflict the same punishment on idolaters? Again, such is the law respecting the undutiful son. Deut. xxi. 18—21. "If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, who will not obey the voice of his Father or the voice of his Mother, and that when they have chastened him he will not hearken unto them;

then shall his father and his mother lay hold upon him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city and unto the gate of his place ; and they shall say unto the elders of his city, " This our son is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice ; he is a glutton and a drunkard ; and the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die." Are *we* too, under obligation to stone our rebellious children to death ? If we are not bound to inflict the punishment threatened in the above mentioned cases, why are we bound to inflict it in any ?

It has been said that the Jewish laws are binding upon other nations in all those cases in which the circumstances are the same. Hence an argument is derived in favor of inflicting the punishment of death at the present day. The argument is after this sort. If no reason can be assigned, why the crime of murder, for instance, should not be punished with death under the present dispensation as well as under the ancient, then those who are now guilty of this crime ought to be so punished. But the argument, if it proves any thing, proves, if I mistake not, *too much*. At least it proves more than those who offer it, are desirous it should. It proves that the idolater, the blasphemer, the adulterer, the fornicator, the disobedient child, and many others, must be put to death. For the resemblance between the cases of these characters and similar ones under the Jewish dispensation is as great as between the case of the murderer *now*, and the murderer *then*. It becomes necessary, to take the ground that all the above mentioned characters should be put to death, or, to acknowledge that the Jewish law imposes no obligation on us to take life in any case. That the penal part of the Jewish laws was not designed to be perpetual in its obligation, may be inferred from what our Lord said to the adulterous woman. (It will be remembered that according to the Jewish law, adultery was a crime to be punished with death) " Hath no man condemned thee ? neither do I condemn thee. Go and sin no more." Why did not our Lord tell the Jews at once to put their law into execution, and take the life of the woman, for she was worthy of death ?

If then *we* are not bound by the Jewish law to take life, is there *any law* in the bible which binds us to do so ? There is one passage of scripture which has been considered as requiring the taking of life in the case of murder. It is found in Gen. ix. 6. " Whoso sheddeth man's blood by man shall his blood be shed ; for in the image of God made he man." " As this truth was revealed to Noah soon after the flood, it was no part of the Jewish system of Theocracy. It had a much earlier date. It cannot therefore be classed with those passages which we have set aside, as binding only on the nation of Israel. Whatever authority it ever imparted, it imparts now ; and whatever obligation it ever created, it creates still."

But does the passage certainly impart authority and create obligation ? It is I suppose acknowledged, that no man has a right to take away the life of another unless God has conferred that right upon him. Now has God conferred this right in the passage under consideration ? Not only so : but has he made it our bounden duty to shed the blood of the murderer ?

The passage, I apprehend, must be understood either in the light of a *command*, or in the light of a *prediction*. For myself I am disposed to view it in the light of a *prediction*.* 1. It has not the usual properties of a command. Not merely because it is in the *future* instead of the *present* tense ; but because the duty of inflicting the punishment threatened, is not sufficiently specific. Under the Mosaic dispensation, the law respecting murder was so plain that none could mistake their duty. Every step of the process was clear. But not so in the present case. How can it be ascertained from the text in question whose duty it is to inflict the punishment of death on the murderer ? or what the form of trial is to be, or whether there is to be any at all ? It has been said by those who consider this passage in the light of a command, that the punishment of death " cannot lawfully be inflicted on the murderer, except by the magistrate—that private individuals have no right to inflict this punishment, and if they should, they would be murderers." But there is nothing in the passage, if it be a command, that I can see, which restricts the execution of the punishment to the magistrate. " Whoso sheddeth," &c. I might as well assert that the nearest relative should be the executioner as the magistrate. In either case it is a mere assumption.

2. I argue the passage to be a prediction from the phraseology of the context. " And surely your blood of your lives will I require ; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man, at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man."

His language carries with it more of threatening than of command. Instead of exacting duty of man, it imports what God in his providence is resolved to effect.

3. The motive urged in the text to *abstain* from murder is another argument, that it is a prediction, and not a command.

The motive alluded to is, " for in the image of God made he man."

As man, even in his fallen state, bears some resemblance to his Maker, he who commits murder is guilty of awful impiety against him. It is the sin therefore of impiety against God as the author of life, which he threatens in his Providence to punish, and to punish through the agency of man.

4. There are other passages of scripture whose phraseology is similar to that of the passage under consideration, that have never been considered as commands.

Such is the one in Matt. xxvi, 52. " Then said Jesus unto Peter,

* When I speak of this passage as being a prediction, I do not mean that it is such in the strictest sense. I do not mean that God, pledges himself that every individual murderer shall be put to death, and that too by the agency of man ; I only mean that it is a general principle in the government of God that one act of violence will be followed by another by way of revenge—that those who kill others, must naturally expect in their turn to be killed.—That the passage in this sense is a prediction, and not a command, may be argued from the following considerations.

Put up thy sword into his place, for all they that take the sword, shall perish with the sword."

No commentator that I know of explains this to be a command, requiring the civil authority to take the life of every man who uses the sword. It is considered simply as what God will effect in the course of his providence.

Dr. Scott on the passage, says, our Lord meant, "That they who are prompt to fight and avenge their own cause, only bring mischief and death upon themselves. Or that the Jews, who now used the Roman sword against him, would soon perish by it."

Another passage of similar import is found in Rev. xiii. 10, "He that leadeth into captivity, shall go into captivity. He that killeth with the sword, must be killed with the sword." No authority is here thought to be conferred on man to take life, much less an obligation created, requiring him to take it. The passage simply indicates that God in his providence, will avenge his saints.

If these have been led into captivity, those who have thus afflicted them, must expect in their turn to be carried captive. If these have been killed with the sword, those who have killed them may expect that God will so order events in his providence that they too will be killed." If they have shed the blood of saints and of prophets, God will give *them* blood to drink.

Why may not the passage referred to in Genesis be explained in the same way as those which I have just recited? Why may not the meaning be, that as murder is an act of great impiety against God, he will be careful to mete the same measure to the murderer which *he* hath meted to others.

5. I argue that the passage in question is not a command, from the manner in which Jacob treated his sons who were murderers. It will be recollected that Simeon and Levi were murderers of the most atrocious kind. They killed, and that under circumstances the most aggravating, all the men of Shechem. How did Jacob treat them? He reasoned with them; he reprov'd them; but he did not put them to death. But why did he not put them to death? He certainly must have been acquainted with the declaration which God made to Noah and his sons, "Whoso sheddeth," &c. And if this declaration was a command, his duty must have been plain. Besides, it should be remembered, that in Jacob's hands was lodged the supreme power of the Patriarchal government, he therefore might have executed the law. "But he was prevented from doing his duty from the mere force of parental affection." Had this been the case, we might have expected some reproof to the Patriarch, from the lips of Jehovah. But as no such reproof was given, we may presume that Jacob was not in fault, and therefore, that the text in question, was not a command.

6. To view the passage under consideration in the light of a prediction rather than a command, will best comport with the spirit and precepts of the Gospel. There is not, that I know of, in all the New Testament, any thing which intimates that it is the duty of men to take the life of the murderer. But would so important a thing as this be omitted if it was duty? especially since it is at best,

but obscurely revealed in the 9th chapter of Genesis. The spirit and precepts of the gospel are opposed to retaliation. Ye have heard, said Christ, that it hath been said, "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," not that an individual under the old dispensation might thus retaliate. It was the business of the magistrate only. But I say unto you that ye shall not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." What reply did Christ make to the two disciples who would destroy the inhospitable Samaritans? "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. The son of man came not to destroy men's lives but to save them." "Recompense, says Paul, to no man, evil for evil. Avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written, vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." God claims it as his right to retaliate.

But it may perhaps be said, that St. Paul, in the xii. chapter of Romans speaks of the magistrate as a *revenger*, to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. No doubt God employs the magistrate as well as private men, to execute his wrath upon the wicked. In the declaration of Christ,—“They that take the sword, shall perish with the sword,” our Lord meant doubtless to execute his threatening by means of *man*, either as a magistrate or a private individual. So in the passage in question, “Whoso sheddeth,” &c. he meant to employ *man* as an instrument to execute his vengeance on the murderer.

But has God any where *commanded* the magistrate under the gospel dispensation to put to death the murderer? In what chapter and in what verse will you find it? If it be said, it is implied in the declaration that the magistrate is a revenger to execute God's wrath upon the wicked, I ask for proof that God has any where commanded the magistrate *to be* a revenger of his wrath? That no such command is expected or implied in the New Testament, may be clearly inferred from a passage in which retaliation is forbidden to the magistrate. It is a passage which I have already quoted. It has been said, “An eye for an eye,” &c. If the magistrate, and he only was suffered to revenge sinners under the *old* dispensation, then he, as well as every private person must be prohibited revenge under the *new*, otherwise the two dispensations are precisely the same in point of retaliation, which is contrary to the obvious meaning of the text. Setting aside the government of the Jews, which is certainly no longer binding, would it not be difficult to prove that any civil government now exists according to the preceptive will of God? Has Christ prescribed any where a *form* of government? Has he given any rules for the regulating of the conduct of the magistrate? Would he not have done this, had civil government existed according to his preceptive will? And if civil government exist only by God's purpose or decree, though it may answer very valuable purposes in society, yet can furnish no argument in favor of capital punishment.

Of all that I have said, this is the sum—that the scriptures furnish no evidence whatever that the life of man should be taken in any case *except* murder—and that in this case the evidence is very slen-

der, being derived from a simple passage, the meaning of which is extremely doubtful.

W. A.

FOR THE EVANGELIST.

On the nature and design of the relation of the children of believers to the visible church.

NO. III

IN a former number, I endeavoured to make it appear, that the infants of believers are considered as members of the church, in reference to their conversion and salvation; and also, attempted to show briefly, how far this design has hitherto been accomplished. The means, by which this design is effected, will form the subject of the present number.

The principal means, as I have already intimated, are the faithful exertions of believing parents. The promises of the covenant are conditional in such a sense, that a compliance with its terms is necessary, to give any person a right to its blessings. Certain qualifications are indispensable, that we may have a title to the personal good, proposed in the covenant. We must, for instance, repent and believe, in order that Jehovah may, in the sense of the promise, be our God. Certain qualifications are also requisite, to enable us to claim the promise, in respect to our children; and these, though they imply the first, are distinct from them; and a man may be a true believer, so as to make his own salvation sure, while he is essentially unfaithful to that part of the covenant, which has special relation to his seed. God does not absolutely promise the parent, that he shall have grace, so to do his duty to his children, that they shall, by a divine blessing on his exertions be made the subjects of the renewing influences of the Spirit. The very language of the covenant implies, that its blessings may be forfeited in respect to the children, by some neglect of duty, or want of faithfulness, in the parent. By refusing to circumcise his children, the believing parent would have deprived them of the privileges of the covenant. "And the circumcised man-child, whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant." But if there be in the covenant one condition, a neglect of which, on the part of the parent, will deprive his children of its blessings, there may be others, equally important and indispensable. That there are others, which must be fulfilled by the parent, to ensure the conversion and salvation of his children, on the ground of the covenant, is evident from what the Most High says of Abraham, Gen. xviii. 19. "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken

of him." These words were spoken after the covenant,—“I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed after thee,”—had been established, and Abraham had circumcised his household. It seems, however, that he had a great work to do, that the promises of the covenant might be fulfilled towards his seed. He was to command his children and his household after him. It was thus that they would learn to do justice and judgment, or become truly pious, and the promise respecting them would receive its full accomplishment. All this faithfulness Abraham had promised, in covenanting with God; and God saw that Abraham would act agreeably to his engagements. God determined to give to Abraham the grace which was necessary to make him faithful. Every parent virtually makes the same promise respecting his children, whenever he takes the covenant into his mouth; and on the condition of his fidelity to this engagement, the Most High promises to be the God of his seed. Yet this, by no means, implies, that it is the purpose of God to give to every believing parent the grace necessary to render him faithful to the covenant. The covenant is made with the parent, on the condition of his faithfulness; and if he fail on his part, the obligation of the promise ceases, on the part of God.

It has sometimes been objected to this view of the subject, that it is not sufficiently practical; since none are faithful, and, therefore, none can claim the promises of the covenant, in respect to their children. This objection would be conclusive, provided perfect faithfulness were the condition of the covenant; for it is clear, that none of the fallen race of Adam can be entitled to a reward, on the ground of sinless obedience, in any one of the relations, or duties of life. In many things we offend, and in all we come short of our duty; so that we cannot be accepted, even in our best services, save through the righteousness and atonement of the divine Redeemer. The covenant supposes our depravity, and provides for our acceptance through grace, and not by the works of the law. That parental faithfulness, therefore, to which it promises a reward, is not perfect faithfulness, any more than that holiness, which it enjoins as the condition of personal justification, is perfect holiness. Abraham was very far from doing all his duty, in respect to his children; and he was doubtless sensible of innumerable deficiencies, both in his motives, and in his outward conduct; yet these were not of such a nature, as implied an essential violation of the terms of the covenant. Success, therefore, was ensured to his labours, by the gracious promise of God. Any other parent, who shall be as faithful as Abraham was, will, we have every reason to believe, have the same success. The Most High always deals with the believer in mercy; and, though he deserves nothing, on the score of justice, accepts his sincere, but imperfect services, on account of the immaculate obedience of the Saviour. The covenant, therefore, instead of suspending its promises, in reference to children, on the impossible condition of such perfection, as exceeds the highest obedience of the saints in this world, affords the same encouragement to parental fidelity, as it gives to the exercise of personal faith; and all its proposed rewards are alike of grace.

It has also been objected to the doctrine, I have endeavoured to support, that it leaves the parent in perpetual uncertainty, in respect to the degree of faithfulness made necessary by the covenant; whereas the terms of personal acceptance, it is said, are stated with an explicitness, which precludes every doubt concerning them. But there may be a good reason for such a difference, as is imagined, in the statement of the terms, without supposing, that the promise is in the one case, any less certain than in the other. In the *first place*, an exact specification is the more difficult, in proportion to the number of particulars to be included; and a multitude of particulars even in the lowest sense of the phrase, must come into the idea of parental fidelity. In the *next place*, that very want of clearness, of which complaint is made, may operate on the mind of the christian parent, as a continual motive to exertion. It will naturally lead him to search the scriptures, that he may know what it is which the covenant requires of him; and render him peculiarly vigilant, in the whole tenor of his words and actions. So long as his children continue impenitent, he will have reason to fear, that he has not fulfilled the conditions of the covenant; and if he feel in any degree as he ought, he will be deeply humbled under a sense of his defects, and be excited to pray and exert himself with greater earnestness, lest his unfaithfulness should occasion the eternal ruin of those committed to his care. Besides; with whatever perspicuity the terms might have been stated, we should still be liable to deceive ourselves in regard to our own conduct, as compared with the terms; inasmuch as many mistake their personal character, and account themselves entitled to the personal blessings of the covenant, while the wrath of God abides upon them. Indeed, it is questionable, whether the difference in the statement of the terms, as they regard the salvation of the believer himself, and as they relate to his children, is not magnified by the objector; and whether it is not almost as easy to ascertain what that parental fidelity is, to which the promise is annexed, as to form a specific notion of the nature of saving faith. If disputes upon a subject make it uncertain, there is as much difficulty in determining the nature of true faith, as in defining with precision the degree of faithfulness in a parent, which will, by the covenant, ensure the salvation by his children. I shall not be understood to say, that the nature of justifying faith cannot be known by us: it undoubtedly may be known; and if we err here, we shall be without excuse. Yet this faith, all simple as it is supposed to be, involves many particulars; and, perhaps, it is not possible to give a concise definition, which shall embrace the whole subject. This, at least, has been the opinion of some of the most learned and evangelical divines, which our country has produced. By searching the Scriptures, we may perhaps satisfy ourselves, that the general course prescribed to the parent, is pointed out, with as much distinctness, as the peculiar character of that faith, which unites the soul to the Saviour, and gives it an interest in all the blessings of his redemption. I shall state briefly what appears to me to be a scriptural view of the subject, requesting the reader to keep in mind, what has already been

said, that the covenant is a covenant of grace, and proposes no conditions, but such as may be complied with by creatures, who are sanctified only in part.

The general maxim, on which I would ground all my observations, on this part of the subject, is this: *The believing parent, in order that he may have a right to the promised blessings of the covenant in reference to his children, must be faithful to them, in the same sense in which he is, from the very nature of his religion, faithful to his own soul.* This, as it appears to me, is the most unexceptionable mode of stating the subject. It cannot be believed, that the pious parent will fail of complying with the terms of the covenant, in regard to his children, if he be as faithful to them as he is to himself; nor is it easy to see how any lower terms could, with propriety, have been proposed. Let me then attempt to illustrate this reasonable maxim.

1. The believing parent habitually aims at perfection in his obedience. It is essential to true faith, that its possessor should ever be dissatisfied with his present attainments, and labour after perfect conformity to God. The truth of this remark will be evident, by a recurrence to Scriptural examples. With the same earnestness, that the believer seeks his personal sanctification, let him labour to perform the duty he owes to his children; and never feel as if he had done enough, while any thing remains undone.

2. The parent must have faith in the covenant, in order to be personally interested in its promises. "Without faith, it is impossible to please God." The parent must believe, that the good, promised to the saints, will be bestowed; and he must cheerfully give up himself to God, according to the tenor of the covenant. He must also have faith in the covenant, in respect to his children. If he does not believe, that the Most High is as sincere, in promising to be a God to the seed of his people, as to them *personally*, he lacks the most important requisite, to render successful his endeavors for the salvation of his children. No divine promise can be verified to us, till it be received by faith. "He that cometh to God, must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him." And as the christian dedicates himself to God, in firm reliance on the covenant, so he must, in like manner, dedicate his children. It is no wonder, that the parent should be sluggish in his efforts, or that he should exert himself to no purpose, so long as he feels disposed to explain away the promise, or to distrust the faithfulness of Jehovah.

3. True faith always manifests itself by correspondent fruits. Hence an unoperative faith is condemned in the Scriptures as spurious. "But wilt thou know, O vain man! that faith without works is dead? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." And as that faith, which ensures our personal salvation, is active; so likewise, must that faith be, which embraces the covenant, as it relates to our children. As merely passive feelings afford no proof of the existence of the former kind of faith, so they give no evidence of the existence of the latter. Let us then observe the manner, in which justifying faith exhibits

itself in the life, and we shall have a rule, whereby we may judge of the natural operations of that faith in the covenant, which is connected, in the promise, with the conversion and salvation of our children.

1. The believer evinces his faith by a diligent attendance on the public ordinances of religion. Love to the sanctuary and the public worship of God, is ever represented as essential to real piety. They, who are faithful to their children, will be disposed, so far as practicable, to give to them the privileges, which they themselves enjoy. As they desire the seal of the covenant for themselves, so they will not deny it to their children. The prompt obedience of Abraham should be an example to believers in every age. "In the self-same day, as God had said unto him, was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son; and all the men of his house, born in the house, and bought with money of the stranger, were circumcised with him."

2. Daily prayer is one of the fruits of faith. Prayer has been justly termed the breath of the new-born soul. It is the habit of every good man to make known his wants, and pour out his requests, before God. Let him, in this respect, be as faithful to his children, as he is to himself. He prays, that he may be enabled to do his duty, and be restrained from sin. He should also pray in respect to his children, that he may have wisdom and grace to be faithful to them, aware of his many temptations to remissness and inconstancy in this important work. His prayer for divine guidance, and for perseverance in this most interesting duty, should be unremitted. He cannot hope to overcome his personal corruptions, without prayers, neither can he, without prayer, reasonably expect a blessing on his exertions, in behalf of his children. His own salvation depends on the grace of God. The same is true of his children. He ought, therefore, to seek the powerful influence of the Spirit, for them, as well as for himself. He should also teach them to pray for themselves, and prove to them by his conduct, that he does earnestly intercede for them at the throne of grace. Hence, the reasonableness and importance of constant family prayer.

3. The believer hates all sin in himself, aims to govern his passions, and habitually imposes a restraint on his corrupt propensities. It is for this reason, that his life is compared to a warfare.—Paul said, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." This passage implies, that the subjection, of the body of sin is indispensable to the christian character. And as the believer restrains his own corruptions, so let him seek to restrain those of his children, by the wholesome exercise of that authority, which God has given him. The parent ought to do all in his power to check the ebullitions of inward depravity in his children, instead of pleading, as is sometimes plead, in excuse of a weak indulgence, that it is vain to oppose what is natural, and that the fire of imbred concupiscence must have vent. No such lessons are taught in the Bible; but that book requires us to spare the faults of our children, as little as our own. As we would wish for

their salvation, we must not withhold from them the correction they need. "He that spareth the rod, hateth his son; but he that loveth him, chasteneth him betimes. Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying. Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him. Withhold not correction from a child; for if thou beatest him with a rod, he shall not die." The correction, enjoined in these passages, is rational, and fitted to impress the mind of a child with a sense of the parents' regard for his everlasting welfare, and the great evil of sin. It is, therefore, utterly unlike that brutal violence, which indicates nothing so strongly, as the bad temper of the parent himself.

4. Faith excites the Christian to use great diligence to become acquainted with the truth of that volume, on which all his personal hopes depend. For this purpose, he reads the scriptures with constancy and with prayer; and deems it a peculiar privilege to attend on the preaching of the gospel. To be equally faithful to his children, he must labour with unwearied assiduity, to teach them the peculiar doctrines and duties of Christianity. As he seeks for himself to know those truths, which constitute the distinguishing glory of the Bible, and are most offensive to the carnal heart; so he must, with the utmost plainness, inculcate the same truths on his children, giving to every sentiment a place, proportioned to its importance, in his system of religious instruction. It too often happens, that the lessons of a parent are of a most useless kind, in consequence of the apprehension cherished by him, that his children, in their earliest years, are incapable of understanding those humbling doctrines, which he acknowledges in general, to be most essential to the christian scheme. It is not wonderful, that, under such superficial teaching, children become strongly prejudiced against the truth; and that the attempt should in vain be made, in later life, to eradicate error, planted in the most susceptible soil, by a parental hand. What reason have we to expect a blessing, when children are guarded against outward vices, without being reminded of that original and entire depravity, which is the source of all the disorders of the life; and, instead of being taught their absolute dependence, their infinite obligations, and the indispensable necessity of renewing grace, are virtually encouraged to hope for the divine acceptance, and eternal happiness, simply on account of their freedom from gross immorality, and the inoffensiveness of their manners. Truth, if any thing, must be the means of the conversion of children as well as of adults, and the parent, who forgets this, will probably learn too late, that the self-righteousness, which is permitted to vegetate, undisturbed, in infancy, will, in riper years, mock all his efforts to extirpate it. With the very dawn of his reason then, let the child understand his native sinfulness; and learn the doctrine of Christ crucified, which is the wisdom of God, and the power of God unto salvation.

As it is the duty of the parent to meditate on his own covenant obligations; so he should earnestly set before his children, the obligation of the covenant, lying upon them; showing them under

what peculiar advantages they are placed, and how aggravated must be their guilt and their punishment, should they, by continuing impenitent, render worse than in vain, all their privileges, arising from their solemn dedication to God, and their relation to the visible church. They should be taught, that they can never free themselves from the bonds, imposed upon them by the vows of their parents. The will of the parents is, in such a case, a law. So it was considered in ancient times ; and Samson and Samuel were bound by those engagements, which were made before their birth.

These important instructions should be given affectionately, and in a manner the best calculated to excite an interest in the youthful mind. It should be the study of the parent to teach the gospel to his children, with a strength of evidence, and with a simplicity adapted to their tender years. Nor is it enough, that he occasionally speak to them on the subject of religion. His doctrine should drop like the rain, and distil like the dew. He should thus convince them, that he values the gospel himself, and that his heart is truly set on their conversion. He should be patient of labour ; and persevere, though unsuccessful, in his work of love. The divine direction is, " Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thine heart, all the days of thy life : but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons.—These words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thy heart ; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them, when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. Set your hearts unto all the words, which I testify among you this day, which ye shall command your children, to observe to do, all the words of this law ; for it is not a vain thing for you, because it is your life." Such are the precepts of the bible, in respect to the frequency and earnestness, with which parental instruction should be given.—Need we be surprised then, that so little good is done to children, by the teaching of those parents, who seldom introduce the subject of religion in their families, and who, at most, only spend an hour on the Sabbath, in endeavouring to fasten on the minds of their youthful charge such portion of the scriptures, or some compendium of divinity ? Is this what might be expected of those, who profess to live every day, as strangers and pilgrims ? Is it to be believed, that Abraham suffered days and weeks to pass, in the presence of his household, without dropping one word for God ?

5. It is essential to true faith, that its possessor for himself, should seek first the kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof. This should be the good first sought by the believer, for his children. It should be sought for them first, in the order of time.—His first prayer in their behalf should be, that they may be renewed by the Holy Ghost, and thus become the friends of God, and the disciples of the Redeemer. His solicitude for their spiritual welfare should commence with their existence ; and he should daily carry them on his heart to the mercy-seat, before they are capable of receiving instruction. He should seize the earliest opportunity

to impress upon their minds, religious truth,—to teach them their ruin, their necessities, and the method of recovery by Jesus Christ. Children can be instructed in the vital doctrines of religion, much sooner than is generally imagined; and if suitable efforts were used, there is reason to believe, that many of them would be made the subjects of converting grace, before they had learned any human science. What evidence have we, that their first articulate sounds might not, by the grace of God, be made to give utterance to the sentiments of faith and joy in the Saviour? “Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, thou hast perfected praise.” Many, from a mistaken idea of their incapacity, or perhaps from a sort of impression that they hardly need conversion, neglect the religious instruction of their children, at that period, in which their consciences and hearts are most susceptible of influence from religion. This is certainly a great, and it may prove, a fatal error. Every thing, in the Providence and word of God, urges upon us the importance of beginning as early as possible, to teach our children the great truths, on which their salvation depends. This is implied in their baptism; for why do we dedicate our infants to God in this ordinance, if we have no hope that they may be converted in their early childhood? How many become hardened beyond recovery, in consequence of the neglect of their religious education, during the few first years of their life? The necessity of early instruction is intimated, in the character given of our Redeemer, that “he gathers the lambs in his arms, and carries them in his bosom;” and also, in his direction to his ministers, to “feed his lambs.” The following words of Isaiah, may well inspire the warmest hopes of those who are assiduously labouring for the salvation of their infant charge.—“Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breast;”—such as are very young, or those who have scarcely passed the period of infancy. Agreeable to this, Wisdom says, “They that seek me early, shall find me.”

The kingdom of heaven, and the righteousness thereof, should be sought for our children with the greatest earnestness. The believer feels that religion is of the first importance to himself; he should also feel, and feel habitually, that it is of the first importance to his children. He should realize and demean himself as if he realized, that, whatever they may be in this world, they are, if destitute of piety, emphatically poor, and wretched, and miserable, and blind, and naked. It is right that he should exert himself to make them respectable and happy in this life; but his exertions for this purpose, should be in entire subserviency to a higher object,—the salvation of their immortal souls. How can a parent hope to be instrumental of saving his children, if he manifests more solicitude respecting their temporal interests, than their eternal salvation,—if he is more pained by their worldly misfortunes, than by their impenitence,—if he seeks for them “the gold that perisheth” first, and “durable riches” afterwards? Religion must be pursued as the first concern, compared with which every thing else is vanity, or it is not truly pursued at all. We cannot expect, that this bles-

sing will be bestowed upon our children, in answer to our prayers, if we seek it only as a refuge from the wrath of God, when they can enjoy the world no longer. If we would be successful in seeking their salvation, we must feel it to be of little consequence, provided they be truly converted to God, whether they be rich or poor, honorable or despised, during their abode on earth.

This preference of heavenly to earthly things, we must make manifest in our conduct. A consistent example is all-important; and where it is wanting, counsels and admonitions will prove like water, spilt upon the ground. Of what avail will it be, for a parent to teach and warn his children, if they can see, or think they see, that he is as proud, ambitious, covetous, addicted to pleasure, undevout, morose, unfeeling or vindictive, as those who make no profession of religion? Perhaps we shall not go too far when we say, that he may as well be silent, as speak; the more he exhorts, the more does he dishonour the gospel; and the youngest and most ignorant will easily learn to despise that piety, which seems to exist no where but on the lips. I observe once more,

6. That, as the christian, in seeking his own salvation, places his sole dependance on grace; so on grace he must rely, in laboring for the conversion of his children. He must feel, that, whatever he may do, he is an unprofitable servant; and that he has of himself no more power to convert one soul, than to create a world.—He must be ready to acknowledge also, with a deep conviction of his own unworthiness, that, to grace he is indebted for every useful effort he makes, in behalf of his children, as well as for all his other holy exercises. With these views, he will, of course, be humble, and will abound in prayer.

In the foregoing remarks, every thing essential to that parental faithfulness, to which the promise is annexed, is, I think, included. I do not affirm, that no christian can claim the promise, who is not faithful, to the full extent I have specified; but I do believe, that such faithfulness is, at least, the habitual aim of every one, who may be truly said to comply with the conditions of the covenant, respecting his children. Such faithfulness is promised by every parent when he dedicates his children to God in baptism. He solemnly engages in the presence of angels and of men, to do all in his power for the religious instruction, and eternal well being, of those committed to his care. And can it be supposed, that, should he perform his vows, his labour would be in vain? No,—Were all pious parents deeply sensible, as they ought to be, of their covenant obligations, and their responsibility, there can be no doubt but a generation would arise, such as the earth had never before seen,—a generation, fulfilling the language of prophecy, respecting the seed of the righteous,—a generation, prepared for every good work, and whose example of activity and zeal would soon, by the blessing of God, give a new face to the nations of Christendom, and change the moral aspect of the world.

To produce these blessed effects, much is yet to be done. In the work to be accomplished, the churches are, as instruments, to have no little share. Too long have they regarded, with cold in-

difference, the children of the covenant ; and have treated them, as if, after their baptism, they were to be thrown off, with the common mass of the ungodly. That sacred rite has, in too many instances, degenerated into a mere form ; and no wonder, that it has been despised ; no wonder, that the uncircumcised have triumphed. It is time for the churches to act with consistency ; and to prove by their conduct, that they do consider the baptism of children as an institution of Heaven, involving the most solemn duties, and significant of blessings, immeasurable and everlasting. Then will the reproach, which has so long rested upon Zion, be removed ; and the unchangeable covenant, on which her hopes are built, will cease to be the by-word and the jest of those, who mock at their solemnities. God be praised, some of the churches are beginning to awake. May their example continue to be followed, till Jehovah shall be universally acknowledged as the God of his people, and of their seed after them.

Is it asked, what a Church can do for her baptized children ?

What ? She can at least remember their covenant relation to the church, and look upon them with all that affectionate interest, due to those, concerning whom such promises are made. This will be one step of no little importance. She need not utterly desert them, as if their state were helpless.

What ? She can keep a watchful eye on the conduct of parents in her communion ; remind them of their obligations, and their encouragements to fidelity ; and if they evidently neglect their duty, she can employ her discipline to reform them. This she ought to do. Is it not insufferable, that children, under the command of a christian parent, should be found in the haunts of the riotous and profane, while the church looks on without concern, and without an effort to correct so dreadful an evil ? Is it thus that she fulfils her promise to the parent, and to the children ? Did she permit them to be baptized into the name of the ever-blessed Trinity,—did she offer her prayers for a blessing on the administration of the holy ordinance ;—did she do all this, only that they might dishonour the father that begat, and the mother that bore them, profane the sacred covenant, and fall under the heavier malediction of God ? She can assemble Christian parents to remind one another of the duties they have engaged to perform, to excite one another to faithfulness, and to present their united supplications for their children. Let such meetings be held frequently, or, at least as often as once in a year ; and may we not believe that an extensive revival of family religion, would, by the favour of God, be the consequence ? But while nothing is attempted, how can we expect that any thing will be done. The head of the Church is not wont to smile on apathy and idleness.

What ? If she cannot immediately inflict her censures on the children, as on those, who are members by their own profession : she can, at least, assist the design of the parents, with whom she is in covenant. Is she not bound to help them in seeking the salvation of their children ? Let her show that she is not unmindful of her obligations. By the consent of the parents, let her call togeth-

er her baptized children, while they are yet young ; remind them of the bonds lying upon them, and their exalted privileges ; urge them to a hearty compliance with the conditions of the covenant ; and show them how tremendous must be their punishment, if they should at last be found with Esau, to have despised their birth-right. Let them be told, that their guilt, in continuing impenitent, is of no ordinary kind ; that they trifle with the most sacred vows ; and the most fervent prayers ; that they are peculiarly inexcusable ; and that delay may place them in that state of confirmed rebellion from which there is no recovery. Let them be told that Jesus has spread his table, and invites them as his guests ; and that if they refuse to come, with penitence and with faith, they openly and publicly treat with contempt all the provisions of his grace. It is acknowledged, that none ought to receive the elements of his body and blood, except such as give evidence of gracious sincerity ; but it should also be remembered, that such sincerity, ought to be possessed by all, and that the want of it in one, who has been dedicated to God, is a crime, involving such guilt and ingratitude, as words cannot express.

Thus let the church instruct and warn her children. Let her convince them, that she feels deeply solicitous for their welfare.—Let her pursue such a course, systematically, perseveringly, and with many prayers. After parents and churches shall have done their duty, and baptized children shall every where still continue to live like heathen ; then, and not before, it will be time to say, *God's covenant has been abolished, and his faithfulness has failed forevermore.*

J. W. H.

FOR THE EVANGELIST.

PARABLE OF THE TARES AND THE WHEAT. NO. III.

The general idea in the parable, which is to be the theme of this paper is, that the righteous and the wicked at the end of the world must be separated and disposed of according to their respective characters. "In the time of harvest," said the husbandman, "I will say to the reapers, gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them ; but gather the wheat into my barn." And said the Lord Jesus, in explanation of the parable, "As therefore the tares are gathered and burnt in the fire ; so shall it be in the end of the world ; the Son of Man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things which offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire ; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." It will be observed that the harvest, according to this explanation, is the end of the world ; or the day of judgment. The field however, is the world. This is the place where they are to dwell to-

gether. The idea therefore cannot be, that the same persons who are now upon the earth, shall dwell together until the end of the world. This would contradict daily facts. But the idea is, that until the day of judgment, or the end of the world, there shall be some righteous and some wicked living together. With respect to individuals there is a sense, in which the day of death is the end of the world to them. Death puts an end to all their worldly prospects and pursuits, and separates them from all worldly enjoyments, and from all opportunities and means of preparing for a future state. And at death, too, the separation between those who die in impenitence and unbelief, and those who have embraced the Saviour and thus become children of the kingdom, is made. Though they may have lived together in the world, in the same town or society or family, they will now dwell together no more. This agrees with the representations of Scripture. To the penitent thief on the cross, our Lord said, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise. Of Judas it was said, that he was gone to his own place. Poor Lazarus died and was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom. And the rich man also died, and in hell lifted up his eyes in torment. Thus, the day of death is the end of the world to individuals; the time of separation between the righteous and the wicked. But the day of judgment is the time when this separation will be formally and publicly made.

But let us examine a little, what this separation and different disposal of the righteous and the wicked imports. It has been remarked in a former number, that such is the situation of the tares and the wheat, while growing together in the field, that a stranger would not be able to determine, on which of the two the husbandman sets the highest value. And such are the external circumstances of the righteous and the wicked, in the present world, that judging from these, merely, no one would be likely to conclude, that the righteous are more highly favored of the Lord than are the wicked. But when the harvest shall come, this will no longer be the case. No more doubts will cloud the subject. Then such a separation will take place, as will present the matter in a clear light. Every one will know, on which the highest estimation is placed. Suppose the husbandman should employ a reaper to reap his fields, who has never seen either tares or wheat, and is totally unacquainted with their respective value. This reaper goes with the husbandman into the field. There stand the tares and the wheat together, in equal readiness for the sickle. For aught that appears, they have been cultivated with equal care and attention; and perhaps the quantity of tares is equal or superior to the quantity of wheat. Now should any one inform him, that one of these is very valuable and held in high estimation by the husbandman; while the other is of no value, and fit for nothing except fuel, would he not be utterly at a loss to know, which was the valuable production? But soon the husbandman gives him his directions. These, says he, are tares, which you must gather together and bind in bundles to be burned. But the other is wheat, which you will carefully preserve and gather into my barn. Now the reaper is no longer in doubt. He well

knows on which of these things the husbandman places the highest value. "So shall it be in the end of the world." Then shall the children of the kingdom, and the children of the wicked one be separated, the one from the other, as carefully as this husbandman separates the wheat from the tares. And in future a plainly marked distinction shall be kept up between them. The children of the wicked one shall be cast into a furnace of fire, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth; and the children of the kingdom shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Or as it is expressed in another place, *the former shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the latter into life eternal.* That such a marked distinction is to be made, hereafter, in the situation of the righteous and the wicked is abundantly and uniformly taught throughout the Bible. We are assured on the one hand, that the righteous *shall* and on the other, that the unrighteous *shall not* inherit the kingdom, of God: that the desire of the righteous shall be granted; but that the fear of the wicked shall come upon him: that when a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish; but that the righteous hath hope in his death. The Lord Jesus assured his followers, that in a future state, they should dwell with him and behold his glory. But we are told that the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. It would be easy to multiply quotations of this sort from the sacred volume. We are every where taught, that mankind are divided into two classes of essentially different characters; as different as the tares and the wheat; and that a separation shall finally be made between them; and that it shall be made according to their characters, or according to their different value. The righteous shall be eternally and consummately happy, in the full enjoyment of God. They shall dwell in his presence, where is fulness of joy, and at his right hand, where are pleasure forever-more. But, the wicked shall be separated forever from all good, and be made completely and hopelessly miserable. No language can set this matter in a plainer, and more striking light, than that of this parable, as explained by Christ. The tares are the children of the wicked one, and the wheat are children of the kingdom, which God has prepared for them that love him. And the tares shall be gathered together, and be bound in bundles to be burned; while the wheat shall be carefully gathered into the husbandman's barn.

But why are the righteous and the wicked, the children of the kingdom and the children of the wicked one, to be treated so differently? When the reaper in the case supposed was informed, how differently the tares and the wheat were to be treated, he would very naturally inquire, why must all this difference be made? And to such an inquiry, what must have been a proper answer? Must it not have been, that the wheat could be applied to a very valuable use, while the tares were of no value, but were hurtful rather than otherwise, as they tended to prevent the growth of that which is valuable? If the inquiry were pushed farther, and it were asked, why is the wheat valuable, and the tares of no value? Must not the answer be, that wheat is useful in promoting happiness; tha

it is in its own nature calculated to nourish and comfort mankind, and thus to increase the sum of happiness; while tares have no such tendency; but rather tend to obstruct happiness? So, if any being unacquainted with the character of men were to see how differently they are finally to be treated, some being cast into a furnace of fire, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth, while others shine forth as the sun, in the kingdom of their Father, he would very naturally inquire, Why are they disposed of so differently? Are they not all equally the creatures of God? Are they not all equally dependant on him, and subjects of his government? Are they not all endued with similar powers and faculties, and capacitated for the same enjoyments, and the same sufferings? Why, then, are they thus differently treated under the government of God? Must not the answer here be, that they are really of very different value? Surely this must be the case, whether we are able to see how, or not. For God will treat every being in the end according to his real worth. The truth is, God esteems every creature valuable in its place according to its usefulness in promoting his glory and the general good. Now, the "children of the kingdom" unite actively with God, in seeking to promote the same benevolent end, which he ever has in view. They find their happiness in this object; and all their efforts, so far as they are influenced by right affections, are directed to the attainment of it. Hence they actively answer the design, for which they were created. They seek the glory of God in the highest happiness of his kingdom. And God is herein glorified; for they bear much fruit. In this way, they do that which is acceptable to God, and on account of which he sets a high value upon them. Hence they are in the Holy Scriptures called his "jewels," and are said to be a "peculiar treasure" to him. But the "children of the wicked one," as is obvious from their character, are not only not active, in promoting the cause of God and of happiness, but they are active in opposition to him and to his cause. They are seeking for happiness where God does not allow them to find it; and of course he stands directly in the way of their enjoyment, and they hate him. Instead of seeking the general good, as he requires them to do, and finding their happiness in so doing; they are seeking to aggrandize themselves; and regardless of the general good, they would take possession of those objects which are gratifying to their own hearts, however great the dishonour might be, which this would bring upon God; or however great the injury might be which this would bring to his cause and kingdom.

They therefore do nothing with a view to the divine glory, or the general good. They do nothing in which it is their object to advance the general happiness. As to any real good they do, as their own act, therefore, they are useless, and worse than useless. Their efforts are in a direction which tends to counteract the operations of the divine government, and to frustrate the purposes of God. And if it were possible for them to succeed, the happiness of the universe would fall a sacrifice to their personal gratification. The Kingdom of Jehovah would be subverted and God himself be de-

throned. Hence in Scripture they are compared to useless 'chaff;' the "chaff of the summer threshing floor;" and also to "tares," which are not only useless but noxious. Is it not suitable, then, that God should estimate such characters very differently from those which are good? Is it not right that he should honor one and lightly esteem the other? This certainly would appear suitable among men. If a man had two servants, one of whom should prove very faithful to his interest, and do all in his power to promote it; and the other should prove very unfaithful and treacherous, and even appropriate his master's property to his own use, every one would say, that it would be suitable, for this master to hold these servants in very different estimation; and to punish the unfaithful one, while he rewarded and honored the other. Every one sees, that a Washington and an Arnold should be held in different estimation by every American; and for the obvious reason, that while one was actively engaged to promote the interest and happiness of his country, the other to gratify his own private views and feelings would have sold it to its enemies. So the "children of the kingdom" are actively engaged in the service of God; they love his character; they love his laws; they love his benevolent designs; and they are actively united with him, and with all holy beings, in advancing the interest of his kingdom; while the wicked hate his person, his laws, and his government, and are opposed to the interest of his kingdom. Thus Paul, after his conversion to the christian faith, became exceedingly active in promoting the interest of Christ, which Judas in betraying him, would have sold to his enemies, for thirty pieces of silver. And every child of the kingdom has something of the spirit of Paul; while every child of the wicked one has much of the spirit of Judas. Surely then there is reason enough, why persons of such different character should be held in different estimation, and have a very different portion assigned them in a future world.

Possibly it may here be objected, that the children of the wicked one, as really as the children of the kingdom, are made subservient to the general good. Pharaoh, though he despised, hated and opposed God, was nevertheless made subservient to the accomplishment of his purposes, as really as was Moses. In him God obtained unto himself a name and great honor. So Senacherib accomplished divine purposes, though he "meant not so, neither did his heart think so." And even Judas in betraying and the Jews in crucifying the Saviour of the world, were subservient to the accomplishment of divine purposes, and instrumental in preparing the way for glory to redound to God, and good to his kingdom, in the salvation of a multitude of souls, which were ready to perish. Why then were they not useful? And why should they not be honored and rewarded? The answer is, "they meant not so, neither did their hearts think so." God has indeed overruled all their wickedness for good. But though he has brought good out of evil, the evil in itself is none the less on that account. If these men had been permitted to accomplish the object they had in view, instead of advancing the glory of God in the general good, they would have

defeated all his benevolent purposes, and introduced universal anarchy and misery into the system. Their character must be estimated by the state of their own hearts ; by the object they had in view. The good which had been brought out of their conduct was effected by God, and not at all by them. To God therefore, belongs the glory and to them belongs the same infamy, which would have belonged to them, if they had actually succeeded in their wicked designs.

H. W.

FROM THE UTICA CHRISTIAN REPOSITORY.

THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.—BY BUNYANUS.

CHAPTER VII.

While the pilgrims were thus engaged in their meditations, near the cross, and giving vent to their various feelings, I observed a man come up to them, in the habit which Evangelist wore, whose name was *Self conceit*, and with a countenance which expressed some pity, and much contempt, he began,

S. c. Unhappy, deluded men ! What do you mean, by looking at that cross with so much emotion ? You seem to be full of wild ecstasy, rapture, and enthusiasm.

Ard. I cannot but weep, when I look at that cross, and think of him who died upon it, to make atonement for sin, by the shedding of his blood.

S. c. I pity your ignorance. You are not acquainted with the works of that great and excellent philosopher, the very learned and worthy Doctor Priestley, or you would not entertain the absurd and vulgar idea that the death of that man made any atonement for sin. He says, “ Christ being a man, who suffered and died in the best of causes, there is nothing so very different in the occasion and manner of his death, from that of others who suffered and died after him, in the same cause of Christianity, but that their sufferings and death may be considered in the same light with his.” The death of Paul, or any other martyr, might as well be considered as making atonement for sin. But I want no atonement. My good moral life is all my dependence.

Ard. But, does not Paul speak of Christ as him “ in whom we have redemption *through his blood*, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace ?

S. c. Paul indeed says it ; but the same great philosopher has told us that Paul often reasons inconclusively. No doubt Paul said what he thought ; but he was in the same mistake that you are.

Th. But this goes to deny the divine authority of the scriptures.

S. c. Yes : the same excellent and worthy Doctor says to one of his correspondents, “ Neither I, nor I presume yourself, believe implicitly every thing that is advanced by any writer in the

Old or New Testament. I believe all the writers to have been men, and consequently fallible, and liable to mistake." "That the books of scripture were written by particular divine inspiration, is a notion destitute of all proof, and that has done great injury to the evidence of christianity."

Th. If you reject the doctrine of atonement, and deny the inspiration of the scriptures, I see not why you are not a Deist, and consider him who died on the cross, not as the Lord from heaven, but a vile impostor.

S. c. No ; I am not a Deist : I am a Unitarian Christian ; that is, a liberal, enlightened, and rational christian. I venerate him who died on the cross, as a good man, but as nothing more than a man, who had no existence till he was born of Mary. The difference between us and Deists, however, is not great. The same worthy and learned philosopher, in speaking of a man who had been thought a Deist, says, "He is generally considered as an unbeliever : If so, however, he cannot be far from us, and I hope in the way to be not only almost, but altogether what we are." And my very worthy friend, the enlightened and liberal Mr. Cogan, says, "The sincere and conscientious Deist cannot be far from the kingdom of heaven ;" in which sentiment I cordially concur.

Th. But if Christ was a good man, he would tell the truth ; and he speaks of himself as having come down from heaven, and says, (John 6. 62,) "What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where he was before ?"

S. c. I know not what to do with this passage, but to deny that Christ ever uttered it. My great master, the aforesaid acute and learned philosopher, did not know what to do with it. He confesses, that, "Though not satisfied with any interpretation of this extraordinary passage, yet rather than believe our Saviour to have existed in any other state before the creation of the world, or to have left some state of great dignity and happiness when he came hither, he would have recourse to the old and exploded Socinian idea, of Christ's actual ascent into heaven, or of his imagining that he had been carried up thither in a vision ; which, like that of St. Paul, he had not been able to distinguish from a reality ; nay, he would not build an article of faith of such magnitude on the correctness of John's recollections and representation of our Lord's language ; and so strange and incredible does the hypothesis of a pre-existent state appear, that sooner than admit it, he would suppose the whole verse to be an interpolation, or that the old apostle dictated one thing, and that his amanuensis wrote another."

Ard. I cannot bear to hear my Lord and Saviour thus degraded. You suppose him, who knew all things, not to be able to tell whether he was in heaven or upon earth !

S. c. He might be a very good man, and yet be ignorant of many things. That truly great and good man, the very learned and worthy Mr. Beisham, says, "The Unitarian doctrine is, that Jesus of Nazareth was a man constituted in all respects like other men, subject to the same infirmities, the same ignorance, prejudices, and frailties." And to give one instance, I would observe, that he, no

doubt really thought, that many in his day were possessed with devils ; but my great master, Doctor Priestley, has shewn that this was a vulgar error of the Jews, and that there are no such beings as devils, those people being only deranged in their intellects.

Th. Did Mr. Belsham think, then, that Christ was a sinner ? If he was "a man in all respects like other men," that seems to be a necessary conclusion.

S. c. We are not fond of using such harsh language ; we prefer softer terms. We call many things infirmities and frailties, which others call sins. We do not like to be so impolite as to call a man a sinner, unless he is grossly vicious. We entertain a very favorable opinion of the goodness of human nature. And Mr. Belsham thinks, that "with few, if any exceptions, there is a very great preponderance of good, in every individual."

Ard. I know too much of my own heart to believe that. I know that in my natural state, "Every imagination of the thoughts of my heart was only evil continually." And hence I feel the need of "the washing of regeneration," and of cleansing by the blood of Christ. And whatever you may say, I am resolved to follow the example of the scripture saints in praising and adoring my Lord and Saviour. "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God, and his Father : To him be glory and dominion, for ever and ever, Amen."

S. c. I must conclude of you, as the very worthy, enlightened, and liberal Mr. Lindsey does of those like you : "There is no reasoning with such persons : they are to be pitied, and considered as being under a delusion of mind." The great and excellent Mr. Belsham says, "Jesus is indeed now alive. But as we are totally ignorant of the place where he resides, and of the occupations in which he is engaged, there can be no proper foundation for religious addresses to him, nor of gratitude for favors now received nor yet of confidence in his future interposition in our behalf."

So the man left them, and went on in the road of the pilgrims ; and they soon after walked on also, discoursing together.

Th. That Self-conceit must be ignorant of his own heart, to think he can depend upon his good moral life, and has no need of any atonement for his sins. I could never think of accepting Paul or Moses as my Saviour.

Ard. I feel that I need an Almighty Saviour ; and that it would be only insulting my misery to bid me trust in a creature. Those who have any proper sense of the sinfulness of their hearts, cannot be led away by this man.

F. w. I am not disposed to embrace his sentiments respecting the atonement ; for I know that Jesus died for my sins, and that I have received pardon through his blood.

Love-s. I can never admit that Christ is a mere creature ; for if he had been, his obedience could never be set down to my account. He must have been required to obey for himself.

No-law. And if he had been a man "in all respects like other men," his death must have been a punishment for his own sins ;

and so my sins could not have been all punished in him, which is my only hope.

Th. I do not see how the obedience of Christ to the moral law, can ever be set down to our account. If he had failed of being perfectly conformed to that law, on his own account, it would have been a sin in him. He was tried by the tempter in the wilderness; and if he complied with his temptations, he would have been a transgressor, and utterly unfit to make atonement for the sin of the world. His obedience to the moral law was perfect, but no more than perfect. It was necessary to qualify him to make atonement, but did not constitute any part of the atonement itself; for it is written, "It is the blood which maketh atonement for the soul."

No-law. Is it not written also, that "by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous?"

Th. Yes. But that is not what is commonly called his active obedience; that is, his conformity to the moral law; but it was what is called his passive obedience—his obedience to the command of the Father in laying down his life. He says, "No man taketh it from me; but I lay it down of myself: I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." It is by his obedience to this commandment, that is, it is by means of his laying down his life, and pouring out his precious blood on the cross, that many are pardoned, or justified from their sins. But his active obedience, or conformity to the moral law was necessary for himself, to qualify him to make atonement by his blood, as a lamb without blemish and without spot.

No-law. I cannot agree with you. You seem to talk like a legalist. You would divide the work of your salvation with Christ. And while he bore the punishment of your sins, you would obey for yourself. You seem to be opposed to salvation by grace.

Th. I am not conscious of feeling any opposition to salvation by grace alone. I believe that the salvation of a sinner is all of grace, from beginning to end. If it is not, I am sure there can be no hope for me. But you will perhaps be more confirmed in your opinion, when I add, that I do not consider the sufferings of Christ as a true and proper punishment for the sins of men.

F. w. Why, brother, how you talk! You are more of an Arminian than I am. Brother No-law calls me a legalist, because I am for works. But I believe that Christ bore the punishment of my sins. Oh, I know he did; and I bless him for it.

Th. I think that the punishment which the law threatened to sin is eternal death. And Christ did not suffer eternal death: he rose again on the third day.

Love-s. How then can a sinner be exempted from the punishment of his sins? If they are not fully punished in his surety, they must be fully punished in himself.

Th. They must be fully punished in himself, or they must be freely forgiven for Christ's sake. If they are punished, either in himself, or in another, (if that were possible,) there is no room for forgiveness. When a punishment has been fully inflicted, no more is due. But where no punishment is due, there is none to be re-

mitted. The way of salvation by him who died on the cross, is a way of forgiveness. It is written, "Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins." This forgiveness is granted freely to all that are willing to accept it as a free gift to the ill-deserving. Thus, I think, justification is an act of grace, as well as every other step in the sinner's salvation.

F. w. Grace ! Yes : salvation is all of grace. But it is free grace; that is, free for all, nothing more being done for one than there is for another.

Th. It is free grace, indeed. But it is free, because bestowed freely upon the ill-deserving. Pardon is indeed offered freely to all ; but all reject it, and if nothing more was done for them, none would ever accept it.

F. w. Oh yes. Nothing more was done for me than there is for every other man ; but I worked for it, and got it.

No-law. You are both too legal. You hold to works. I am for grace, without works.

By this time, I perceived that they had arrived where christian saw Simple, Sloth and Presumption, asleep by the road side, and who had been hanged for their crimes, when Christianna and her company passed by. And here they found, on the left side of the road, a considerable village named Careless, inhabited by the posterity of those men, who walked in the steps of their fathers. And as they passed along, a man came out to meet them whose name was Puff, and invited them to turn aside and rest themselves a little. And then, said he, you may have an opportunity to hear a sermon from our minister, the most popular preacher in all these parts, Mr. Self-conceit, a very worthy and excellent man, I assure you, and the most agreeable preacher I ever heard.

Ard. I have some knowledge of him already, and I do not wish to hear him.

Puff. You never heard him preach, I suppose ; for if you had, you must admire him, and wish to hear him again.

Ard. No, I never heard him preach ; but I heard him converse in such a manner as I wish never to hear another.

Puff. You must have provoked him to engage in controversy, I conclude. But he never introduces any controversy into his preaching. He dwells exclusively on "those great truths and precepts, about which there is little contention." He never introduces any of those unintelligible doctrines about which christians have so often disputed. He thinks it would "perplex, and needlessly perplex, a common congregation, consisting of persons of all ages, capacities, degrees of improvement, and conditions in society." All the inhabitants of our village "will testify, how little he has sought to influence them on the topics of dispute among christians, how little he has laboured to make them partizans, how constantly he has besought them to look with candour on other denominations, and to delight in all the marks which others exhibit of piety and goodness." He "professes to accord with that apostle, who has taught us that charity is greater than faith and hope ; more excellent than the tongue of angels, and the understanding of all myste-

ries." And as a proof of his of excellence as a minister, I could mention, "the singular prosperity he has enjoyed." Perhaps in no part of the world is the condition of ministers more favoured than his. Whilst he receives nothing of a superstitious homage, or a blind submission, he finds himself respected by all classes of society, and, I may say, distinguished by the eminent, the enlightened, and the good." In our society there are no divisions, no jealousies, no parties to disburb us." He often appeals to us, from those who wish to slander him; saying, "Brethren, you know me for I live among you; I visit you in your families; I speak to you from the pulpit; I repair to you in your sorrows; and I sit too at the table of your festivity." And we all agree that we have no fault in him, for he is exactly one of us in all respects.

Feel. w. I did not, Indeed, like all his conversation, when we saw him; but I think I should like his preaching, if it answers your description. I feel inclined to stop and hear him.

Love-s. And so do I. But your church, I see, is some distance out of our way. I should like to hear him, for once extremely. But, the day is far spent, and I should like to reach the house Beautiful to night; for I hear that there is good entertainment there for pilgrims. And I am afraid we shall not get there if we stop. I do not like to go so far out of our way.

Puff. That need be no objection. You will find good entertainment in our village, at the house of Mr. Easy, or at the house of Mr. Indifference. They are the deacons of our church, and entertain pilgrims at free cost.

No-l. I shall certainly stop. I do not mind going a little out of the way, or staying all night. I would not miss the opportunity of hearing such a popular preacher, if I had to stay even longer.

Th. I cannot consent to stop, nor to turn aside out of our way. And besides, I have no desire to hear such preaching as has been described. And from the conversation we had with Mr. Self-conceit at the cross, it is plain, that he is an advocate of error, whom we are forbidden to hear.

Feel-w. You are too uncharitable, brother. I did not like all he said to us; but I will not condemn any man, because he differs from me in some things. We cannot all think alike any more than we can all look alike.

No-l. Brother Feel-well has spoken my mind exactly. For though I differ from him in many things, yet we have come all the way together, without any displeasing feelings between us.

Feel-w. Yes; though I differ from you all, in some things of minor importance, yet I have perfect charity for you all. And I can bear testimony, that brother Love-self, and brother No-law, and I, have come all the way from home, with the greatest harmony of feeling. Pilgrims may feel alike, if they cannot think alike; and there ought to be union among them all.

Loves-s. Yes; that is right. I am for union too. And though I do not enjoy myself quite so well as brother Feel-well, and have more trouble than brother No-law; yet I believe we feel very much alike in the main, and agree in the essentials of our experience.

Puff. I am sure, then, you will be pleased to hear our minister. He preaches universal charity, and teaches us unbounded liberality to all denominations.

Th. I beg leave to read a sentence or two from my book, which appear to me to decide the question of duty. It is written, "Take heed what ye hear.—Cease, my son, to hear the instruction which causeth to err from the words of knowledge.—I beseech you, brethren, mark them with cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned ; and avoid them.—If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed : for he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds." From what this man said to us, at the cross, it is plain, that he does not bring the doctrine of Christ, but preaches another Gospel than that which is contained in the King's statute book.

Ard. I am satisfied that we ought not to hear this man. And I have no inclination, for he would rob me of my Saviour, and destroys the foundation of my hope.

F-w. You must do as you think best. I do not understand those passages of your book as you do. I depend more upon my own feelings, than upon the interpretations of such dark and difficult passages. My feelings are in favour of hearing him this time ; and I know by them it is right for me to do so.

So Feel-well, Love-self, and No-Law, turned aside with Mr. Puff, and Thoughtful and Ardent went on their way. Then said Ardent to his companion,

Ard. I thought it evidently wrong to hear this man, because he denied the divinity of our Lord, and rejected the authority of the King's statute book. But I had not thought of its being wrong to hear others whose errors are less flagrant. The passages you read, however, seem to go further than I had supposed, and prohibit hearing those who propagate any error.

Th. Every error must be hurtful in a degree ; and one error naturally leads to another. It is no doubt wrong to hear those who propagate any error which is subversive of the gospel ; any fundamental error. And there must be some danger in hearing any error whatever.

Ard. How shall we know where to draw the line ? For I suppose that many preach error mixed with truth, some more and some less.

Th. I am not prepared to answer the question. I should like to be better informed on that point. But so much I think is plain, that any error which represents the gospel system to be essentially different from what it is, in doctrines, experience, or duties, must be a radical and fundamental error. And that those who propagate any such error, ought not to receive any countenance or encouragement. And I think it plain, from the passages I read, that if we do give countenance and encouragement to such, we become partakers of their evil deeds.

Ard. I think I can see a reason why those who are not established

in the faith, would be likely to receive injury from hearing error, but I do not see why those who are well established, might not hear it sometimes with advantage to themselves. It is well to know what can be said on both sides of a controverted point.

Th. There are other ways for us to promote our own improvement, without taking any methods which the King has forbidden. But if it were not dangerous listening to deceivers, the King's book would not have given so many portions on that point.

We may have too high an opinion of our own knowledge and stability, and be led out of the way, before we are aware of the danger. But if you and I were in no danger ourselves, we might by our example, do great injury to others. If the young, the weak, and the ignorant, were to see those whom they esteem wiser and better than themselves, going to hear an advocate of error, they would be likely to think they might do so too. And thus, if we should receive no injury to ourselves, we might be the occasion of ruining others. I think it safest, therefore, to obey the precepts given, and shun every appearance of evil, and every occasion of evil to ourselves or others. And I think it a good rule that where any action is of doubtful propriety, we should abstain from it. He that is disposed to approach frequently to the extreme limits between right and wrong, will be in danger of overstepping those limits, especially where those limits are not clearly defined. And he that allows himself to go as far towards the wrong as he can with safety, gives us occasion to suspect that he would like to go further if he dared, and to fear that he will, at some time, acquire the courage to do so.

FROM THE CHRISTIAN MAGAZINE.

SUCCESS OF MISSIONS.

NO. IV.

Mission at the Islands in the South Seas.

The London Missionary Society was formed in 1795. A mission to the islands of the South Seas was the first object that claimed their attention, and engaged their efforts. On the 28th of July, 1796, thirty Missionaries were designated to the important work of planting the gospel of Jesus Christ in the midst of those remote seas. They embarked on the 10th of August and arrived at Otaheite, after a pleasant and prosperous voyage, on the 6th of March, 1797. The original objects of the voyage were to establish Christian Missions in Otaheite, the Friendly Islands, the Marquesas, the Sandwich and the Pelew Islands. The two latter islands were relinquished, and the missionaries were stationed *eighteen* at Otaheite, ten on one of the Friendly Islands, and one, on one of the Marquesas. The two latter stations, owing to the intestine commotions of

the islands and the ferocity of some of their inhabitants, were terminated within two years.. But the station at Otaheite has been attended with more auspicious results. With some interruptions from the frequent insurrections of the islanders, the missionaries pursued their labours. They travelled around the island, and preached to thousands of the natives; some of whom gave them an attentive hearing, but the greater part treated their message with levity and disregard. Pomare, the king, was their steady friend and protector. They continued to labour with unwearied assiduity for several years, without any apparent success, or encouragement, except what arose from the hope that a silent influence was operating, which would, at length, become apparent by its external effects. But they continued under every discouragement to preach the gospel in different parts of the island. After seven years' labour one of the missionaries writes to the directors as follows; "Instructions continue to be given to the inhabitants of Otaheite in the things of God, but apparently none are savingly profited by them; they seem to remain gross idolaters, enemies to God by wicked works, without God, without hope; yet it must be confessed that very many of them have obtained a considerable, though as yet unsanctified knowledge of the doctrines of christianity." Upon which the directors of that period thus remarked. "We cannot but hope that where a number of poor heathens born and educated in total ignorance of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Saviour, obtain a considerable knowledge of the doctrines of christianity, the seed of life may be considered as already sown, and a just expectation indulged that the harvest will one day bless the eyes of the labourers and of the Society." How just were these anticipations will be seen from the result. Soon after a civil war broke out between King Pomare and a party of his subjects, who wished to deprive him of his authority, in consequence of which, the missionaries were driven from the island. The rebels burnt the houses of the missionaries, destroyed their gardens, and seized all the society's property which could not be hastily removed by the missionaries. In consequence of these calamitous events, and the gloomy prospects before them, the missionaries (except two) concluded to sail for Port Jackson. They had not remained there long before they ardently desired to resume their labour in the South Sea Islands. In the mean time Pomare wrote to them expressing his deepest sorrow at their absence, and affectionately entreated them to come back. The missionaries being also informed that peace was established, and Pomare's authority restored, five of them returned and resumed their labours. The king continued to manifest his friendship for them until July, 1812, when he declared to them his full conviction of the truths of the gospel, and his determination to worship Jehovah as the only living and true God. He had before cast away his idols, he now became a practical believer. "He regularly observed the Sabbath, entertained clear and consistent views of the doctrines of the gospel, expressed the deepest contrition for his past wickedness, and laboured to persuade his relatives to embrace christianity. This was very encouraging to the

missionaries. During the two next years, the fruits of the divine blessing on the labours of the missionaries became more and more conspicuous, so that in their report of 1814, they say that fifty had renounced their idols and become the worshipers of Jehovah. This was on Eimeo. About the same time there seemed to be a spirit of inquiry on Otaheite, and some there renounced their idolatry. On both these and some of the neighbouring islands, the congregations increased and the number of those who renounced heathenism, and became the professed worshipers of the true God, multiplied continually. The priest in the district where the missionaries resided renounced idolatry, and publicly committed his god to the flames. His example was soon followed in both of the Islands, and not only were idols cast into the fire, but their places of idolatrous worship and altars were destroyed, and "even the wood, of which they were composed, used to dress common food, of which different classes and both sexes partook indiscriminately at a common meal, in utter disregard of prohibitions and customs, rendered powerful by the united influence of superstition and antiquity." The mission continued to flourish greatly.—Without spending time to mention in detail the many occurrences and events which were favourable to the progress of the work, we hasten to the joyful result of the indefatigable labours of these persevering missionaries.

In the course of the next year, just nineteen years from the time the missionaries sailed from England, idolatry was entirely abolished both in Otaheite and Eimeo, and these together with some smaller Islands, became by the blessing of God, altogether *Christian Islands*. Their idols were destroyed, human sacrifices and infant murders abolished, and the people were every where earnestly calling upon the missionaries to come and instruct them in the knowledge of the christian religion. Places for the public worship of the true God had been erected and were erecting in every district, and where there were no missionaries to conduct public worship, the natives had prayer meetings among themselves.

Although this change was at least sudden, operating through the whole of these Islands nearly at the same time, yet it was not an inconsiderate change. To use the language of the directors of the society, "The harvest which at length has proved so rapid and complete, sprang from seed that had long been diligently, patiently, copiously, and generally sown among them. The Otaheiteans for twelve years had opportunity of closely observing the nature of practical christianity as exemplified by the missionaries, and during most of that time, its doctrines had been explained, and urged upon their attention, in every district of the Island. In declaring themselves christians therefore, they well know what they profess to believe, and what kind of conduct they bind themselves to observe. From the effects produced upon the natives we have every reason to suppose the change a real one which will be permanently salutary. With their idolatry the people have renounced their former system of thinking and acting—an evident reformation of manners has taken place, their vain and indecent amusements are almost entirely laid aside, and a degree of domestic and social inter-

course is enjoyed to which formerly they were entire strangers. A desire for knowledge is universally planted among the natives, and at least three thousand of them are supplied with books. The way is opened for civilization, to the introduction of the useful arts, and to the cultivation of the earth. How great the success, and how incalculable the benefits of this mission. "On several occasions the mission seemed on the verge of ruin—the lights which had long shone dimly, repeatedly appeared to be nearly extinct—but, under the good providence of the Almighty and his gracious influence, it has at length burst out into a far brighter day, than the missionaries ever anticipated." Their benevolent and persevering efforts have been at last rewarded by the conversion of a whole people, from a religion of the most barbarous and dreadful description, polluted by frequent human sacrifices, to an adoption of the mild precepts of christianity. And the consequent change in their social and moral character is most extraordinary.

This change is described by Messrs. Tyerman and Bennet in a letter to the American Board, dated August 9th, 1822. These gentlemen visited the islands as the representatives of the London Missionary Society. Under every advantage arising from a particular view of the islands and a personal intercourse with their inhabitants they write, under the above date, the following paragraph with which we shall close this number.

"Having spent some time in the South Sea Islands, it may not be unacceptable to you to receive our views of the state of religion in those highly favoured regions.—You have, no doubt read the reports which have been made respecting the state of that mission;—and be assured, that so far from those reports being exaggerated, much more might have been said. The work is indeed marvellous in our eyes, and excites in our hearts the most lively gratitude to that God whose hand has been so signally displayed in it. The inhabitants of those Islands were sunk into the lowest possible state of moral degradation; but are now we hesitate not to say, viewing them as a body, the most universally and consistently christian of any people upon the face of the earth. The sabbath is universally regarded. The individual is scarcely known who does not attend public worship three times on the Sabbath day, and several times in the week. The congregations are large, and as well behaved as any congregation we ever saw in England. Numerous churches are formed of pious persons; while multitudes are waiting for admission. Full three fourths of the people can read, and many write and cypher. Industry is every where apparent, and civilization has already made considerable progress. Towns are rising up composed of houses built according to the European style. Our furniture is imitated, and the people aim at the same modes of living and clothing. Crimes are very few. Peace and happiness are every where apparent. The marriage vow is held sacred. Infanticide is wholly discontinued. Religion is the great business of life, while secular affairs, though not neglected, are held as only secondary.—All the food wanted for the Sabbath is dressed on Saturday; not a fire is lighted, nor a canoe is seen moving on the water, nor are any

visits paid on the Lord's day. Never did the gospel obtain a more complete and glorious triumph over ignorance, and sensuality, and superstition, since the world began."

W.

Extract from a sermon delivered in London by the Rev. Dr. Mason, of New-York.

"I cannot find, in the lively oracles, a single distinctive mark of Deity, which is not applied without reserve or limitation to the only begotten Son. 'All things whatsoever the Father hath are his.' Who is that mysterious Word that was in the beginning with God? Who is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the ending, the first and the last—the Almighty? Who is he that knows what is in man, because he searches the deep and dark recesses of the heart? Who is the Omnipresent, that has promised; 'Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them;'—the light of whose countenance is at the same moment the joy of heaven and the salvation of the earth; who is encircled by the seraphim on high, and walks in the midst of the golden candlesticks, who is in this assembly; in all the assemblies of his people; in every worshipping family; in every closet of prayer; in every holy heart? Whose hands have stretched out the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth? Who had replenished them with inhabitants, and garnished them with beauty, having created all things that are in both, 'visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers? By whom do all things consist? Who is the governor among the nations, having on his vesture and on his thigh, a name written, 'King of kings and Lord of lords?' Whom is it the Father's will that all men should honour, even as they honour himself? Whom has he commanded his angels to worship? whom to obey? Before whom do the devils tremble? Who is qualified to redeem millions of sinners, from the wrath to come, and preserve them by his grace to his everlasting kingdom? Who raiseth the dead, having life in himself to quicken whom he will, so that at his voice all that are in their graves shall come forth; and death and hell surrender their numerous and forgotten captives? Who shall weigh in the balance of judgment the destinies of angels and men dispose of the thrones of paradise, and bestow eternal life? Shall I submit to the decision of reason? Shall I ask a response from heaven? Shall I summon the devils from their chains of darkness? The response from heaven sounds in my ears; reason approves, and the devils confess—This, O Christians, is none other than the GREAT GOD OUR SAVIOUR.

"I cannot find in the lively Oracles, a single distinctive mark
of Deity," which is applied without reserve or limitation to the only
begotten Son. "The 'all things' he possesses, are delivered" to him by
the Father. The Spirit of knowledge and wisdom which he hath
without measure is given him by the Father. The Power also
which he possesses in all heaven and earth is declared to be given
to him by the Father. The perfect felicity which he enjoys at the
right hand of the Majesty on high, ~~and~~ the unrivell'd glory which beams
around his blessed person in the celestial Temple, and the name at which
every knee in heaven & earth must bow, ~~is~~ ^{are} given him by the Father, as
the high reward of his humiliation and mediatorial triumph.
Who is that mysterious Word that was in the beginning with God?
Who is he that knows what is in man? Who is he who hath most
graciously promised to be present with all true worshippers? By
whom did God create all things? Whom shall he set on the holy hill
of Zion, to whom shall he commit the government of the nations, who
shall be master and Lord of Kings & Lords of the Earth?"

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hath on his vesture and on his thigh written 'King of Kings & Lord of Lords'?
To whom hath the Father committed all authority, that all men should
honour him even as they honour the Father? Whom hath he commanded
his Angels to worship? Who is the high King of peace, who all holy
intelligences are to honour, to the glory of God the Father? To whom is

given all power in Heaven & in Earth, that he may give eternal life to
millions of lost sinners, and ransom them from death and hell, and
present them finally in the holy place not made with hands, without
spot, with exceeding joy? To whom hath the Father given to have life
in himself, to quicken whom he will, and to raise his disciples at
the last day? Whom hath he appointed to weigh in the balance of
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son of God.

Of he to whom these high powers and prophecies are given
and to whom this authority is committed, is himself, the
supreme and independent Jehovah, let Mr. Mason inform
us who hath given to the Almighty, and it shall be
recompensed to him again?

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W.

Extract from a sermon delivered in London by the Rev. Dr. Mason, of New-York.

"I cannot find, in the lively oracles, a single distinctive mark of Deity, which is not applied without reserve or limitation to the only begotten Son. 'All things whatsoever the Father hath are his.' Who is that mysterious Word that was in the beginning with God? Who is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the ending, the first and the last—the Almighty? Who is he that knows what is in man, because he searches the deep and dark recesses of the heart? Who is the Omnipresent, that has promised; 'Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them;'—the light of whose countenance is at the same moment the joy of heaven and the salvation of the earth; who is encircled by the seraphim on high, and walks in the midst of the golden candlesticks, who is in this assembly; in all the assemblies of his people; in every worshipping family; in every closet of prayer; in every holy heart? Whose hands have stretched out the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth?' Who had replenished them with inhabitants, and garnished them with beauty, having created all things that are in both, 'visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers? By whom do all things consist? Who is the governor among the nations, having on his vesture and on his thigh, a name written, 'King of kings and Lord of lords?' Whom is it the Father's will that all men should honour, even as they honour himself? Whom has he commanded his angels to worship? whom to obey? Before whom do the devils tremble? Who is qualified to redeem millions of sinners, from the wrath to come, and preserve them by his grace to his everlasting kingdom? Who raiseth the dead, having life in himself to quicken whom he will, so that at his voice all that are in their graves shall come forth; and death and hell surrender their numerous and forgotten captives? Who shall weigh in the balance of judgment the destinies of angels and men, dispose of the thrones of paradise, and bestow eternal life? Shall I submit to the decision of reason? Shall I ask a response from heaven? Shall I summon the devils from their chains of darknes? The response from heaven sounds in my ears; reason approves, and the devils confess—This, O Christians, is none other than the GREAT GOD OUR SAVIOUR.